

Hartford Mayor's Cabinet for Young Children

School Readiness and Child Day Care Program Operations

Definition of Space Types (B-04)

SCHOOL READINESS:

The Mayor's Cabinet for Young Children recognizes the importance of access to high quality preschool opportunities based on the diverse priorities of Hartford families with young children. In accordance with CT School Readiness legislation, municipalities receiving School Readiness funds must ensure working families have year-round access (50 weeks per year) particularly for those families without vacation time to preschool services. Therefore, funded school readiness programs must be flexible and responsive to challenges that families encounter with early care and education as they transition back to work and ensure their access to high quality programs.

The Mayor's Cabinet for Young Children and its Department of Families, Children, Youth and Recreation's Division for Young Children intentionally funds different types of spaces in programs to meet the needs and preferences of Hartford families with young children. These space types are defined by the state with specific criteria and funded School Readiness Programs must utilize their spaces in a manner that most effectively uses funding while serving the families that are in need of that type of space.

The Mayor's Cabinet for Young Children and its Division for Young Children fund the following school readiness space types:

- **Full-Day/Full-Year Program (referred to as Full-Day program):** Provides early care and education services to children 10 hours per day, five days per week, for 50 weeks per year. Children eligible for these programs must be consistently in need of services for a minimum of six hours per day, five days per week for 50 weeks per year.
- **School-Day/School-Year Program (referred to as a School-Day program):** Provides early care and education services for six hours per day, five days per week for a minimum of 180 days. Children eligible for this type of space must be consistently in need of services for a minimum of five hours per day, five days per week for 180 days. School-Day programs operate within the public school calendar, typically September through June.
- **Part-Day/Part-Year Program (referred to as a Part-Day program):** Provides early care and education services for 2 ½ hours per day, five days per week for a minimum of 180 days per year. Part-Day programs generally operate within the

public school calendar, typically September through June however; Part-Day programs can operate for more than 2 ½ hours per day and more than 180 days per year.

- **Extended-Day Program (referred to as a Wrap-Around program):** Provides early care and education services that extend the hours, days and/or weeks of programming for children who are in an existing Part-Day/Part-Year or Part-Day/Full-Year program, not funded by the School Readiness grant, in order to provide the equivalent of Full-Day services for these children for 10 hours per day, five days per week for 50 weeks. Children eligible for these programs must be consistently in need of services from the combined Part-Day and Extended-Day programs for a minimum of six hours per day, five days per week for 50 weeks.

In addition, the Mayor's Cabinet for Young Children and its Division for Young Children monitor space type awards to ensure that at least 50 percent of the City's school readiness spaces meet the requirements of Full-Day/Full-Year (10 hours per day, five days per week, and 50 weeks per year) and all space types meet all minimum requirements.

The Mayor's Cabinet for Young Children requires its school readiness sub-grantees receiving funds for Full-Day/Full-Year or Extended-Day slots that operate for fifty (50) weeks or close for days other than the traditional holidays to have a written Alternative Care Plan Policy. Each sub-grantee's policy should be submitted to the Division for Young Children for approval in order to ensure that during the time a program is closed, the families and children in that program are supported in accessing other childcare. The policy requires:

- The sub-grantees to submit for prior approval, a written plan for alternative care to accommodate families' needs that includes the alternative care programs that will be used;
- Parents to be informed of the Alternative Care Policy when they enroll and the available alternative care programs;
- Parents to be given at least a two-week prior written notice of the closing;
- Parents to sign a form for their child's file that indicates if they need the alternative care; and
- The cost of alternative care arrangements to be reimbursed to the parents if a fee is charged to the parent.

Each sub-grantee's plan for alternative care must guarantee Full-Day service for all families requesting it during a closure. Sub-grantees may develop cooperative arrangements with other early childhood programs in the community, within their own

programs or provide payments to parents for weeks when care is not provided. Clear notice must be given to parents in advance, allowing sufficient time to make their own plans as needed.

The Department of Families, Children, Youth and Recreation's Division for Young Children reviews and approves requests from sub-grantees and notifies the state of approved plans. This clarification applies to requests for all closings, which may be in one or two-week blocks or individual days that total no more than two weeks per year. It does not allow for variance from the hours or days required or for less than fifty (50) weeks of Full-Day care.

CHILD DAY CARE:

Categories for Child Day Care that the Division for young Children sub-contracts are:

- **Full-time Infant/Toddler:** Care for children from six weeks to three years of age that is provided for at least thirty (30) hours per week. Care for these slots shall be made available for 10 hours per day for five days per week.
- **Full Time Preschool:** Care for children from three years of age to six years of age that is provided for at least thirty (30) hours per week. Care for these slots shall be made available for 10 hours per day for five days per week. This category of care includes children who attend half-day kindergarten, but does not include children, regardless of age, who attend elementary school for three hours or more per day. In addition, children enrolled in a child care slot funded by this agreement during the months of September, October, November or December, who will be three on or before January 1, may be enrolled as a three-year-old.